

outlined before we hope to be able to go back to that late Monday and complete action on that bill.

I know the distinguished Democratic leader wishes to speak, and also the Senator from Nebraska—how much time?—2 minutes.

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, so, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Nebraska be recognized for 2 minutes, and the distinguished Democratic leader be recognized for whatever time he may use, and that after his statement the Senate stand in recess under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. EXON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. EXON. I thank the Chair and my friend and colleague, the majority leader.

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY ACT

Mr. EXON. Mr. President, before the leader leaves the floor, I want to say I have listened with keen interest to the opening remark by the majority leader and the introduction of the welfare reform bill and the spirit of compromise that he expressed and exchanged with Senator MOYNIHAN, who has been a leader in this for a long time. I am looking forward to the remarks by the minority leader, which I think will follow, probably on this subject.

I just want to say that after being here 17-plus years, I do not believe there is anything that probably is more important or more necessary for reform. And I hope that the spirit of compromise which started out this debate will be part of the debate, because I believe that this is not something that we want to make a political issue out of it. This is a problem that we all know of that is very fundamental to the whole prospect that we have of getting our fiscal house in order and doing the right thing in a fair way.

I hope we will not have any filibuster. I hope that maybe we can be so bipartisan that maybe we will not even use tabling motions. Maybe we can just have up-or-down votes on all of the amendments. I am not trying to direct how this is moved forward, but I think if we are going to get something done, it is going to have to be a combination effort with the combination of the majority Members and minority Members having a say so and let the body work its will on the various amendments.

I will have more to say on this probably on Monday or later. I am very much concerned about it. I am very happy it has finally come to the fore. And I salute the majority leader and the minority leader, Senator MOYNIHAN, and others, who have had a key role to play. I do not think we are too

far apart. I hope we will not become too far apart during the debate which will ensue.

I thank the majority leader and the minority leader, and I yield the floor.

Mr. DASCHLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, let me concur first with the comments made by the distinguished Senator from Nebraska. I hope that this can be a very meaningful and productive debate. I have every expectation that that is indeed what will occur. This is a very important issue, and we will all have much more to say about it next week.

Mr. President, we begin the debate today, and I must say I am encouraged by the remarks of the majority leader and certainly by the ranking member of the Finance Committee, because I think it is indicative of the hope expressed oftentimes on the floor that we can deal in a meaningful way on an issue as important as welfare reform this year.

I believe that in many respects there are similarities between the Republican and the Democratic approaches to welfare reform, but there are some fundamental differences as well. And those differences, of course, have to be worked out over the course of the next several days.

I believe that it is very important, as we look to how to achieve meaningful welfare reform, that several principles guide our way, that several principles determine the degree to which we come together and create the scope within which welfare reform can be accomplished.

I believe that it is important to end welfare as we know it, as the President has challenged us to do. I believe that most people recognize, that with all of its good intentions, we have not been able to cope with the myriad problems that we continue to witness and experience simply because the infrastructure we have created is unable to accommodate the solutions that are necessary under the current set of circumstances.

The Family Support Act, a major piece of legislation offered at that time by the senior Democratic member of the Finance Committee, later to be chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator MOYNIHAN, was really a landmark piece of legislation in 1988. Now, 7 years later, we realize we have to go even beyond what we did in 1988 with the broad agreement that we had in 1988 that it was a very significant step ahead, a step forward in the progress that we knew we had to make in achieving much of what we had set out to do 30 years ago.

Mr. President, I believe that the principles of welfare reform that must be incorporated as we begin to address this issue next week, first and foremost, recognize that we change the infrastructure of the welfare system as we have known it for so long. It is important that we abolish the AFDC system and create in its place an ability

for us to put the emphasis where it ought to belong, put the emphasis on work, to make the welfare office of today the employment office of tomorrow, to give people an opportunity, a confidence that they do not have today that they will have the jobs skills, they will have the ability, they will have the resources to get jobs and to keep them.

Work First—an emphasis on work ought to be the emphasis of welfare reform. We feel so strongly about the need to make work that priority that we call our bill the Work First welfare reform plan, because that is where the emphasis must be put, on work with skills, with education, with placement, with whatever resources may be required to ensure that people work.

Second, we think it is very important that if, indeed, we are going to acknowledge the importance of work, we also acknowledge that it is impossible to ask a mother or a father, but in particular a mother, to go out, to take perhaps a minimum-wage job if there is nothing that we can tell them will happen to their children. If we tell them we are going to force you to take that job out on some hamburger line but we know you have kids 2- and 4-years-old and you are just going to have to leave them at home or you are just going to have to figure out a way to deal with them, my guess is there is not going to be much incentive to go do that.

So what we say is somehow we have to come up with innovative ways to ensure that parents will know that their kids are going to be cared for, that somehow those children are going to have to have the ability to be cared for, to be protected, to be nourished, to be trained to do all the things that the mother would do if she was at home with those children and not at work.

There is an inextricable link between child care and welfare reform, between expecting a young mother to go out and work and recognizing how important it is that those kids get care.

It does not take a rocket scientist to find out that one of the big problems we have in society today is that there are too many kids that do not have any guidance, do not have any affection, do not have any relationship with their mother or their father. Whatever relationship they get, they get out on the street.

Look what happened in that brutal circumstance just the night before last at the McDonald's 15 blocks from here. I do not know what happened to that kid. I do not know what caused him to go in at 2 o'clock in the morning and blow away three of his fellow employees. But I would be willing to bet he did not have a father. I would be willing to bet he probably had nothing at home. I would be willing to bet he received no guidance in those developmental ages. I would be willing to bet we lost that kid a long time ago.

I hope we do not have to experience that over and over and over and over again. Whether or not that happens, it

seems to me, is dependent upon whether or not we provide mothers and fathers with an opportunity, a confidence that we are going to deal with that problem. I think if we can deal with child care, there is a long way we can go in meaningful welfare reform.

Third, I believe that it is important to end the cliff effect. If we tell that mother or that father, "You know what, we are going to force you to go take a job, but as soon as you do, you lose your health insurance, it's over."

I have to tell you, I do not think there is a whole lot of incentive. I think they are going to do this all over again. I do not think there is any real expectation they are going to want to get a job, if they get a minimum wage job away from their kids and lose their health insurance through Medicaid all at the same time. That "ain't" going to happen.

So I think we have to recognize that while they are on that job, somehow we have to ensure as well, for at least a while, that they are entitled to Medicaid to see that they have all the incentives to go out and get a job that we can.

Next, I think we ought to tell those parents, that mother or that father, unequivocally, "Look, if you do not go out and get a job, there is a timeframe within which all of your benefits are gone. We're not going to give you benefits in perpetuity. It's over. A 2-year time limit and you don't have access, you don't have eligibility, you don't have an opportunity to get additional benefits for the foreseeable future. That is not going to happen anymore. We are going to work with you. We expect you to sign a contract with us that you are going to get a job. We're going to help you find one. You have to live up to your responsibilities, we will live up to ours. But it is over in 2 years. And if it is over, you are going to work in public work jobs, you are going to work in workfare, you are going to work in some way, but you are going to work, and you are not going to get benefits. It is not going to be like it is today where you can just keep going forever. That time is over."

So there is a time beyond which we can no longer provide this safety net.

Next, I think it is very important that States have the flexibility. That is one thing that I think unites Democrats and Republicans, the need to give the maximum degree of flexibility. I want to see every State work, but there is a big difference between Montana, the State of the distinguished Presiding Officer, and a South Dakota on the one hand, and a California and a New York on the other. There are big differences between New York City and Missoula, MT, or Pierre, SD, or Philip, SD. There are big differences and we have to recognize that, and the only way we can recognize it is to give States the flexibility they need to adapt to a Philip or adapt to a New York City.

So we recognize that, and we are going to do all that we can to ensure that States have that flexibility. But what we do not want to do is just simply load up all of the responsibilities in a black box, send it out and say, "You do it. And we're going to somehow figure out whether or not you have done it 10 years from now, and if there are huge disparities 10 years from now, well, we will deal with it then." We are not going to let that happen. We have to ensure that somehow there is a minimal maintenance of effort.

Also, we do not want unfunded mandates to the extent potentially you could see them if we do not do this right. A locally elected official not too long ago said this could be the mother of all unfunded mandates if this thing is done wrong. If we just say we are going to give them a block grant, they have to do it. We cut the funds, somebody ends up with all the responsibility and no resources.

We are not going to let that happen. So it is very important that we not make this an unfunded mandate, that we provide flexibility, that we do all that we can to ensure that there is some continuity here.

So the bottom line, Mr. President, is this: We want to end welfare as we know it. We want to ensure that children are protected, that we create a new mechanism by which children will not be punished, but will be encouraged, that parents will not be punished but will come to a new reality about the limits with which we have the ability to help them. But that during those months within which we can help them, we do all that is possible to help them obtain the skills, get the jobs, be responsible and become productive citizens.

Work First, Mr. President, will do that. The Work First plan is a plan that has been the product of, perhaps, more of a concerted effort within our caucus than anything else we have done this year.

Let me commend a number of my colleagues for the effort they have put forth to bring us to this point. Senator BREAUX, the distinguished Senator from Louisiana; Senator MIKULSKI, the distinguished Senator from Maryland; Senator MOYNIHAN, extremely helpful and has provided us within credible leadership on this whole issue; Senator DODD, who knows more about child care than all the rest of us put together; a whole range of Senators within our caucus that have come forth to give us a substantial degree of guidance and leadership and support at each and every turn.

So we are very proud of the product, very hopeful that my colleagues on the other side will take a close look at the Work First legislation with an expectation that, partisanship aside, we may be able to find a solution here. We may actually be able to produce a bill like Work First that satisfies everybody's expectations, that ultimately brings us meaningful welfare reform. I think it

can happen. I am very hopeful that it can happen in the not-too-distant future.

We will take this bill up again next Monday. I look forward to productive debate.

I yield the floor.

Mr. EXON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1½ more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. EXON. I thank my friend and colleague from South Dakota for his excellent remarks. I think they were right on point. I would just like to say to my leader, the Democratic leader and to the Republican leader, that I think the minority leader made an excellent point. The States are going to have a key role to play in this. We know that. I simply say that let us be careful that we do not make some mistakes and just assume that every State is going to take care of this. We also ought to assume that this is not necessarily going to cost less money, because I suspect it is not and that we are going to pass it along to the States and let them worry about it.

I hope that during this debate that since the Governors are going to be very much involved, those of us who served as Governors of our States may have a somewhat unique perspective that is not there by others who have not had the responsibility of serving as Governor and, therefore, Democratic former Governors, Republican former Governors probably can have some pretty good input to this as to how it might affect the States and the responsibilities of the Governors.

Let me close by saying that I believe people in the United States recognize that they are their brother's keepers to some extent.

I think the complaint has been, Mr. President, that the policy that we have had in effect in the past have not worked. People stay on welfare from generation to generation. That is what they object to. I think that is what both plans are trying to address.

Let me finish up by saying how proud I was of my leader, the Democratic leader, for mentioning children. Yes, we are going to have to have some kind of a cutoff date, if you are unsuccessful. We are going to have to raise the minimum wage if this is going to be successful.

Last but not least, we are going to have to recognize what the Democratic leader said. What about kids? Supposing their parents are not successful after being on welfare for a length of time? They are going to have to get off, and we are going to have to have some kind of a cutoff mechanism. But we are also going to have to recognize that we cannot cut off the kids. It is not their direct responsibility.

All of these things must be given consideration. I hope and think they will be.

I thank the Chair and my friend and colleague from South Dakota.

Mr. DASCHLE. I will be very brief, Mr. President. I can only respond by

saying that the Senator from Nebraska has spoken again very eloquently and obviously with the experience that only a Governor can bring to a debate like this. The Senator from Nebraska has been Governor for a long period of time in a State that is not much different from South Dakota, my State. He recognizes the intricacies of making a program like this work and he recognizes as well the differences between a Nebraska and a Florida or a California.

I am delighted he brought up another issue that is also very important as we connect the relationship between success and expectation. We will only

achieve success if we can truly make work pay. If we can make work pay, part of making it pay is to recognize that minimum wage today, if a person will work 40 hours a week, is still below the level of poverty. That is not making work pay.

As the Senator from Nebraska has said so well, if we are going to make this thing work, then we also have to recognize that pieces not directly related to welfare but having a significant impact on it, will have to be addressed as well.

So the Senator from Nebraska, as always, was able to hone in on those two

or three principles that are key. I appreciate the contribution he has made to this effort. I look forward to working with him next week.

RECESS UNTIL MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 1995, AT 9 A.M.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If no other Senator is seeking recognition, under the previous order the Senate stands in recess until Monday, August 7, 1995 at 9 a.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:46 p.m., recessed until Monday, August 7, 1995, at 9 a.m.